

**Question on Notice
No. 9
Asked on 6 February 2007**

QUESTION:

MR WELLS asked the Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism (Ms Nelson-Carr)—

What are the steps and timelines leading up to the opening of the Deception Bay Conservation Park?

ANSWER:

Thank you for asking this question. The ability to give ongoing protection to high conservation wetlands through the Deception Bay Conservation Park is a very satisfying prospect, even though the actual declaration of the park is still some time away.

The Newport Waterways Agreement of August 2005 resulted from lengthy negotiations between the proponents, Redcliffe Seaside Estates, and the State of Queensland represented through the chief executives of five key State Agencies.

Under the Agreement there are a series of conditions that must be finalised before the Government can dedicate the Deception Bay Conservation Park. The key condition, revocation of a small area of Moreton Bay Marine Park, was completed on 17 March 2006. Redcliffe Seaside Estates has 12 months from that date to lodge properly made applications for a range of approvals from local, State and Commonwealth authorities.

Many of these applications have been made and conditions met, including three concurrence responses issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in January 2007 under the *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995* to the Redcliffe City Council, in relation to development approval applications by the applicant for operational works and reconfiguration of a lot. However, there are still some critical project approvals at Newport Waterways that the proponent must apply for to satisfy the interests and responsibilities of Agencies.

Completion of the Agreement is conditional on Redcliffe Seaside Estates obtaining all project approvals and freehold title to certain areas no later than 30 months from date of notification of revocation of the Marine Park section. As such, the EPA may not be able to commence park declaration processes before September 2008.

In the interim, arrangements are in place to ensure that the environmental and conservation values of the Deception Bay wetlands are not threatened. Following a recent increase in unauthorised vehicle use of parts of the land, the EPA and the Caboolture Shire Council are working together to close off all vehicle access to the land.

The site will continue to provide protection to adjacent seagrass beds which are important as fish nurseries and as food for dugong and turtles. The mangroves that fringe the foreshore will continue to support a diversity of living things including fish, molluscs, crustaceans and insects, raptors, seabirds and shorebirds.

The eventual addition of this area to the protected area estate and to the Moreton Bay Marine Park will ensure its long-lasting protection for present and future generations.